

AGGRESSIVE INCIDENT CLEARANCE

Description

Several techniques and policies can be used to aggressively reduce the duration and effect that stalled vehicles or crashes have on traffic while increasing safety for everyone.

Successful programs encompass:

- *Detection*—quickly finding and verifying incidents as they occur (via cameras, sensors, phone tips, media, and information sharing);
- *Response*—quickly dispatching resources and tow trucks; and
- *Clearance*—aggressively removing vehicles from lanes and managing congested traffic until free flow is restored.

Quickly clearing stalls and crashes also reduces secondary collisions—typically rear-end crashes during unexpected stop-and-go traffic.

Target Market

- Freeways sensitive to traffic incidents
- Local streets and freeways with high levels of congestion

Incident clearance works best in corridors that have a high risk of congestion due to crashes or mechanical problems and that are monitored by roving patrols of tow trucks or by sensors providing instant data to operators.

How Will This Help?

- Improve travel-time reliability and decrease delay that accounts for 1/4th of all traffic congestion.
- Increase response time through better coordination and information management.
- Increase safety for emergency management personnel, those involved in the incident, and other drivers.

Success Story

SafeClear, Houston, Texas

With an approximately \$5 million program cost for 250 freeway miles, the program offers a 10:1 benefit/cost ratio for crash and congestion reduction.

Private tow trucks must respond within six minutes. In order to meet response targets, 60 to 90 tow trucks patrol the freeways during rush hours.



Cost:	●●○○○
Time:	Short
Impact:	Region
Who:	City/State
Hurdles:	Policy

Implementation Issues

Public and private agencies must willingly share information and invest resources, especially across jurisdictional boundaries. This requires considerable planning, organization, and a favorable policy environment that encourages interaction and constant communication between all possible stakeholders. When incidents do occur, sharing information rapidly to all users (including drivers via dynamic message signs or other electronic means) and aggressively clearing traffic lanes will maximize this strategy's effectiveness.